

Amendment to the Drawings

A replacement drawing sheet having Fig. 44 is submitted on which the reference numeral θ_2 has been replaced with the reference numeral ϕ_2 as requested by Examiner, in order to correct a typographical error. Support in the original specification is seen at e.g. page 22, last paragraph. No new matter has been added.

A replacement drawing sheet having Fig. 23 is submitted on which the reference numeral W_f on the right hand side of the drawing rearward of pivot axis 70 has been replaced with the reference numeral W_r , in order to correct a typographical error. Support in the original specification is seen at e.g. page 18, line 30 to page 19 line 21, see in particular the discussion at page 19 lines 16-18 of W_f referring to the front portion and W_r referring to the rear portion. No new matter has been added.

It is requested that the replacement drawing sheets be entered.

Remarks

The independent claims are claims 1, 34, 65, 99 and new independent claim 103. Dependent claims 102 and 104 are new. The pending claims are 1-24 and 24- 104. Former dependent claim 25 is cancelled, claims 26-27 amended to recite proper dependencies accordingly. Punctuation has been added to claims 26, 27 and 59 as suggested by Examiner.

The specification and drawing have been amended to correct the objections made by Examiner. In the course of reviewing, a further typographical error is corrected in Figure 23.

Previous independent claims 1, 34, 65 and 99 were rejected as anticipated under §102(b) on either or Ferraro Pat. 5,781,997 or King Pat. 6,167,625.

Claim 1 (directed to the blade unit) and claim 99 (directed to the combination cartridge and handle) are each amended to recite that a leading portion of the elastomeric member overhangs in front of the front portion of the plastic housing, that there is a rearward portion of the elastomeric member that is supported by the plastic housing, and the the width (in the fore-to-aft direction) of the overhang portion exceeds a width of the supported rearward portion. This is shown, for example, in Figure 23. This provides for the advantage of a guard surface having a large elastomeric portion for greater traction but, as discussed at page 13, last paragraph (lines 21-30) allowing the elastomer to be flexible to deflect upon contact with a user's skin, to be better able to conform to contours of the skin, thus effectively increasing the surface area of the elastomeric member that contacts the skin, enhancing skin stretch, and also tending to more uniformly distribute the force applied by the user during shaving. The ability of this elastomeric arrangement of the guard also helps enable use of a large cartridge with more blades and hence a larger blade housing, since it also helps avoid a "rock back" phenomenon that could tend to cause the larger blade portion to lift away from the skin. Neither King nor Ferraro show or suggest more than a relatively small amount of protrusion of the elastomer forward of the housing, nor do they suggest skin conformance (King even suggests the opposite at column 2,

lines 34-36, emphasizing maintaining stiffness), nor suggest that their extent helps balance applied load forces. Therefore amended claims 1 and 99 are believed allowable.

Claim 34 is amended in pertinent part to recite that elastomeric member extends over at least one of the exterior side surfaces. Examiner appeared to suggest that claim 34's not having precisely recited "exterior" side was the basis for the rejection under Ferraro or King, with the Office Action having specifically referred to "interior side surfaces" of housing sides. The extent of the elastomeric members over one or more side surfaces provides the advantage of a grip region or bumper for manual manipulation or more secure mating with a cartridge dispenser, as discussed in the specification at page 13, lines 11 to 15. This feature is not shown or suggested by the references of record, so amended claim 34 is believed allowable.

New dependent claim 102 depends from claim 34 and recites that the elastomeric member extends over both exterior side surfaces, and is believed allowable for this additional reason.

Claim 65 is amended to recite in pertinent part that the elastomeric member, in the region where it extends beyond the width of the plastic housing, tapers continuously from a first thickness adjacent the housing side surfaces to a second, lesser thickness at a center region of the guard. This provides the advantage discussed in the specification at page 14, lines 1-6, to improve the flexibility of the elastomeric member leading edge. Furthermore, as shown in Figures 3D and 40, this continuously taper provides a sculptured region to better enable a preferred blade unit to pivot relative to a blade unit support member that has a strong, outwardly convex bowed or bulbous shape, to allow better pivoting range. The linear, constant overall height guards of Ferraro or King do not show or suggest amended claim 65, which is believed allowable.

Dependent claim 59 is amended to more precisely point out that the second, lesser thickness is at a center region of the guard. It is believed that Examiner misconstrued the original claim 59 to read it onto the individual castellation features of either Ferraro or King, such as one integer of a surface formation immediately adjacent a housing side, rather than being able to identify a taper to a region at the center of the guard.

Applicant : Walker et al
Serial No. : 10/799,962
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Page : 21 of 21

Attorney's Docket No : 8128 (Z-03361)
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New independent claim 103 reads on the elected species and includes original claim 1 and the further features that the elastomeric member extends along a width axis, said width axis extending perpendicular to the blade axes and in a direction from said housing rear portion towards said housing front portion, said elastomeric member covering substantially an entire upper surface of the plastic housing from a forwardmost portion of the shaving blade unit rearward to a location forward of a normal projection of blade unit connection structure onto said width axis. New dependent claim 104 depends from this claim and recites that the connection structure defines a pivot axis. Claim 103 is illustrated in Figures 23 and 26, and its advantages discussed at page 13 of more traction and uniform force distribution. The features of claim 103 are believed not shown or suggested by Ferraro or King or the other references of record.

Upon allowance of a generic claim, it is requested to rejoin the withdrawn claims. New dependent claim 104 reads on a withdrawn species (Group V).

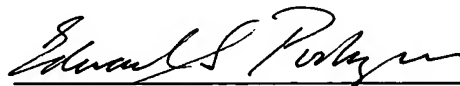
Further Information Disclosure Statements:

Further I.D.S.'s were filed 4 April 2006 and 11 April 2006, and another herewith, and the corresponding PCT Search Report made of record.

The amended claims are believed to recite over the references Examiner cited of interest (Althaus, Andrews, Coffin and Richard), and the references submitted since the Office Action

Respectfully submitted,

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